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By FRANK P. MAC LEANAN.

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General Obregon and General Scott having exchanged conversations for a couple of weeks without reaching any definite understanding about anything, the controversy between Carranza and the United States returns to diplomatic channels, and another note-writing fest is in order. In the meantime, well, prophecy in any field is futile, except that it can be set down for a certainty that the Mexican situation will keep on growing worse, just as it has for so long, and as it will undoubtedly continue to do until the United States does its full duty in the premises.

From the sublime to the ridiculous. A New York automobilist who was participating in a funeral procession was arrested for violating the speed laws for driving his machine at the rate of 28 miles an hour. And he gave as his excuse that he was trying to keep up with the hearse. Possibly the driver of the hearse wasn't arrested out of respect for the corpse that he was rushing so hurriedly to the grave.

Topeka has been a trifle shy this year on the snake strikes that come with the spring, tra, la, but it develops that she has been harboring in her midst a pet alligator that rises on its legs and sings like a frog, only louder, and at 4 o'clock in the morning. Next!

Speaking of disobedient Americans, how about those whom the authorities of Washington have again deemed it necessary to warn out of Mexico. Apparently the only place away from home where Americans have the right to be these days is on merchant ships that traverse the submarine war zones in European waters.

Choice steaks will probably soon have a place only among the pleasant memories of most folk. Some prime steaks sold in Chicago the other day for \$10.25 per hundred pounds, or 20 cents higher than ever before.

Most tobacco chewers have probably never realized the true or market value of the pleasure of their habit. An Indiana man who had his jaw injured in an accident so that he could no longer chew on the weed was \$5,000 damages, not for the pain and suffering that the accident caused him, but because he has been deprived of the pleasure of chewing tobacco. Nothing is said about his possible inability to masticate his food. That, apparently, is a matter of little importance to him.

Few people probably had any idea that Norman Hapgood, late editorial writer for Collier's and later the editorial writer of the late Harper's Weekly, is a millionaire. Maybe he isn't. But Henry Lane Wilson, former United States ambassador to Mexico, has sued him for libel to the tune of \$250,000. And libel suits, like breach of promise suits, are generally predicated on the size of the other fellow's bank roll.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

Trade in its essence is barter, the exchange of one commodity for another, however refined may be the functions of the mechanism devised to facilitate trade, says The Analyst. When a shoemaker pays a dollar for a basket of peaches what he does in effect is to exchange a certain amount of shoe or shoes, which he has made and does not wish to consume, for a certain amount of peaches which he has not produced but which he wishes to consume. The dollar which he has taken from some one for the shoes and which he in turn pays to the farmer who raises the peaches, facilitates the exchange of commodities, but does not alter the essential character of the transaction. The only way to get goods is by offering other goods in exchange. The thought has special application to our present foreign trade position. Just now imports are increasing at a more rapid rate than exports, though both have been running to new high records. We imported more and imported more in March than in any other month in our history, but the balance of exports was somewhat less in March than in February. It is in that direction that con-

tinued progress in our foreign trade lies. We could not hope very long to continue piling up export balances at the rate at which we have been doing. We could at least not hope to do so unless we sold all the goods making up that export balance on long-time credit. The surest way to maintain our foreign trade on anything like its present scale will be to find means of offsetting more of our exports by imports. The supply of American securities abroad is not inexhaustible, nor is the demand in this country for foreign securities. The failure of the supply of one or of the demand for the other would speedily curtail our exports unless against them we took other goods which the rest of the world had to sell.

MERE MEN COUNT FOR LITTLE.

If mere men could win the European war, or crush the Central Powers, Russia would be able to turn the trick single-handed. Although her casualties in dead, wounded and captured since the war began are estimated at the enormous total of 6,000,000, it is stated that her army now comprises some 5,000,000 men and is numerically strong at least as when the war began. But this tremendous force is poorly equipped and badly officered, and its effectiveness is a full fifty per cent less than was Russia's army at the opening of the war. Russia is mighty in men, but men by themselves, without modern equipment and thorough training, count for little in this greatest of wars that the world has known.

DEMOCRATIC EXTRAVAGANCE.

Some question has been raised as to the justice of the charge that the Democratic national administration has been guilty of gross extravagance. What would be considered good evidence to substantiate such a charge outside of an array of complicated statistics and figures that would make rather dry reading?

The testimony of a life-long and loyal Democrat, who is in a position to know whereof he speaks?

If so, here it is.
Warren Worthing Bailey is such a Democrat. And he represents one of the Pennsylvania districts in the lower house of congress. In a recent debate, duly reported in the Congressional Record, he said:
"It is true that the treasury is in a depleted condition. We have gone on spending money with a lavish hand, which should not be done. The Baltimore platform pledged the Democratic party to rigid economy in expenditures. On the contrary, expenditures have been more lavish than ever before. In many directions they have exceeded all previous records. Economy has been a watchword of Democracy. That this watchword should have lost its meaning in these later days is not reassuring. There would be no occasion for the retention of the tax on sugar if decent economy were practiced in carrying on the affairs of the government. To my mind, even the odious stamp tax is less odious than the tax on sugar. I want to protest with all my might against this betrayal of Democratic pledges. Extravagance is a reprehensible unchecked. With every ordinary prudent man might bring expenditure within the limits of income. It grieves me to stand in opposition to my party in this matter. But I cannot make light of my given word. I shall remain loyal to the pledge given and stand true to the people."

Then Representative Bailey voted against the retention of the duty on sugar.

THE SILVER BOOM.

Presumably it is the European war that is also making hay these days for the silver in this country. On April 20, silver was valued at an ounce. In September, 1915, the price was 45 cents. And there is now something of a boom in the silver mining business. It costs between 30 and 40 cents to produce an ounce of silver, under the average silver mining conditions, and there isn't much production in this country when silver costs an ounce. But a silver mining boom is on deck and in its train will probably come a lot of wild-cat silver mining companies that it might be well for those of get-rich-quick tendencies to investigate carefully before they invest their hard-saved money in them.

DOES THE FARM PAY?

In the community there are a certain number of farmers who have found out for themselves how to make a good profit from their farms. They are now being used by county agents as practical object lessons for their less successful neighbors. Under the name of "farmers' demonstration" the county agent analyzes the systems that these men have adopted, compares them with the practice on farms that pay less or not at all, and learns in this way the factors that make for successful farming in a given community. He is then in a position to say: "This is the kind of farming that pays. If you don't believe me, look around you. It's not a theory; it's a fact." The demonstrations of this kind that the United States department of agriculture has been making already, afford some striking instances of the difference in results between good and bad farm management. Recently 64 groups of farms in 19 states were studied in order to obtain a basis for the farmer's interest at 5 per cent on the value of his farm and other capital—in other words, to find out his labor income or wages. In each of these groups, which included altogether 4,400 farms, the conditions were remarkably similar. In each group the farmers were divided into five numerically equal classes according to their labor incomes. It was found that although the average labor income for all the groups was only \$387, the average for

the farmers in the first class—that fifth of the farmers who did best—was \$1,421. In the second class it was \$442. The last class—the fifth of the farmers who were least successful—got nothing for wages and lost, on the average, \$517. That is to say, the interest on the amount of money represented by their farms, stock, and equipment would have been \$517 more than the farm returned them. It should be borne in mind in this connection that the labor income is merely the farmer's wages, and that the family has in addition, besides interest on investment, the use of the farmhouse and such fuel and food as the farm supplies free of money cost. Other demonstrations have produced similar results. In almost any northern community, one-fifth of the farmers are making approximately \$1,000 a year more than the average, and 200 more than the least successful. This is not luck, nor is it altogether, or even chiefly, a question of the skill of the individual farmer. Further analysis will show that the successful men are following certain methods adapted to their conditions and that the unsuccessful are not. It is the business of the county agents and farm management demonstrators to ascertain what those methods are and to point them out.

Journal Entries

Many a person has an undeserved reputation for being clever.

Nothing is quite so excellent for the appetite as good food.

A popular boaster with his landlady is the one who asks for a second helping of prunes.

A man who admits that he is superior to him generally has an ulterior motive of some sort.

Couldn't be otherwise. Father and son have just left school together in Cleveland, but it's a cinch that the kid thinks he knows more than the old man does.

Ever Notice That? A woman contributor, who is a widow, signs her article: "Very Interesting Reader." Well, maybe she is. A good many widows are.

ANOTHER.

Lutie: You can keep your husband at home by putting his trousers in the furnace.

Householder: You say chickens are scarce. Tut! Wait until the next musical comedy strikes town and you will see plenty of them.

Anxious: You can avoid buying so much coal by spending your winters in Florida. You're perfectly welcome.

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On the Spur of the Moment

By ROY K. MOULTON.

Welcome, Emp!

The Emperor of Japan has joined the poets' union and has taken out his first annual poetical license. His initial effusion is as follows, the same being taken from an Anglicized Japanese paper:

Sashji noboru
Asahi no gotoku
Sawayaka ni
Motomashosiki wa
Kokoro narikeri.

"Minato bune
Ikari we aguru
Koe no uchi
Masumi shizukite
Yo we ake ni keru."

The emperor's poetry is not so bad as it sounds. We are very sure of that, and what the emperor lacks in meter, rhythm and sentiment he makes up in originality. On behalf of the Amalgamated Association of Barnstorming Bards, we bid the Emp welcome to our midst.

Answers.

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The Evening Story

From Froststar's Scheme.

(By Jane Osborn.)

The society columns and the Froststar department stories in the daily papers had been full of it. Girls from the stores going home at night had discussed it. According to some it was "grand and perfectly elegant for those swell girls to do it." To others, more critical, it was either a case of wanting to get into print by doing something of the sort or a deliberate scheme to rob the poor girl who needed work of her daily bread.

To Filbert Froststar, junior partner of the dry goods firm of Froststar Brothers & Co., it had a still different significance. It was part of his carefully laid plan to make an entrance into the hitherto closed portals of the city's most exclusive circles.

Thus far, all efforts had failed, and this was particularly disappointing. For Filbert imagined himself far better suited to the graces of society than to the humdrum task of carrying on his share of the business handed down by his father. He had been looking for a way whereby he might cleverly work into the good graces of a few of the society leaders.

So he hit upon this scheme. Luckily it came at the very time when these same society women were at their scrupulous and new and spectacular way of serving charity. They had grown weary of knitting mittens and mending the holes in their winding bandages had paled after a few fervid efforts. So the prospect of working as saleswomen in Froststar's store appealed to them from the start.

The proposition was this: The society women in question were to enjoy all the realities of the life. They were to punch the time clock with the other thousand employees of the store. They were to be allowed to sell goods in whatever department they chose, and for their sales they were to receive 25 per cent commission for their faithful charity.

In order that they might not experience the humiliation of being mistaken for one of the new workers with whom erstwhile they had consented to rub shoulders they were given a bright ribbon sash to wear fastened from right shoulder to left side. And in order that the concern might not miss any of the advantages of this scheme, their work was given in large advertising of it in the morning and evening papers. Incidentally, Filbert hoped to show himself in the new and unusual light of philanthropist to the women who held the keys to those coveted social portals.

The scheme worked better than he had expected, and on a certain Monday morning in late winter the ranks of ten of the largest departments in the store were increased by the presence of ten new employees, who punched the clock with the rest, in spite of the fact that they were not the matchless gloss and elegance of their simple street costumes.

In the neckerchief department was the debutante, Wilhelmina Sedgwick, always most conspicuous in any social gathering. She wore a very dress ball to the horse show. In the millinery department, young Mrs. Sturtevant, who had been a frequent advertiser of it in the morning and evening papers. Incidentally, Filbert hoped to show himself in the new and unusual light of philanthropist to the women who held the keys to those coveted social portals.

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